

Designing Workplace Adjustment (WPA) Services that deliver - worldwide

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Workplace adjustment Strategy – ILOGBDN

A partnership between: webinar PPT



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Objectives today

Providing every employee with **equitable & efficient access** to the tools & flexibility they require to realise their potential – **no matter where they live or work**



TAKE STOCK



REVIEW THE CRITICAL
SUCCESS FACTORS
'THE FUNDAMENTALS'



CONSIDER WHAT GETS IN
THE WAY?



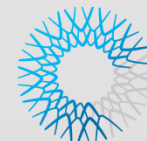
EXPLORE THE POTENTIAL
FOR A LEARNING
EXCHANGE

Questions and comments welcome (please unmute as necessary)



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What do we mean by Workplace Adjustments?

Some examples...this list is not intended to be definitive

- **Hard Adjustments** : ICT, furniture, assistive devices, parking, ramps, lighting, keyboards, ergonomic devices, left-handed mice, chairs etc.
- **Soft Adjustments**: policies & procedures regarding how people work, flexitime, location, deaf awareness training for staff, disability leave, etc.
- **Human Aides**: job coaches, readers i.e. when mandatory e-learning is inaccessible, sign language interpreters, personal assistants etc.



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What might a 'request package' entail?

I have become disabled & now need a parking bay – but the 8 accessible bays are already allocated.

I need a special desk, a more expensive chair, a foot rest and a different keyboard

I need an extra snack break in the afternoon as I am diabetic

I lose 3 hours every time I am forced to hot desk.

I can't access my PDF pay slip & no one is allowed to read it to me

These lights give me migraines

I need a sign language interpreter

I need my personal assistant but I travel to countries where my employer is not obliged to provide adjustments

I need to bypass the standard interview to show what I can do

I need Jaws / Dragon / specialist software



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The provision of WPAs is often not managed as a 'service': employee experience is 'ad-hoc' & inconsistent within and across different jurisdictions



Employee need

- Where do you go first to explain that you need things done differently to make it easier for you to do your job?
- What is your manager's role?

Request help

- Where & how do you register your need for adjustments ?
- Online? Manager? IT Helpdesk? Diversity? Medical?
- Who makes the request: You? Your Manager? The company doctor? HR? Disability Management team?

Do you qualify for adjustments ?

- Who decides?
- Using what criteria?
- How do you 'prove' you qualify?
- Who gets involved? Your manager? HR?, Medical? Legal?, Employee relations? Other?
- How long does it take before you can go to the next stage?

Specific request

- Who decides what should be in your 'WPA package'?
- Are you assessed?
- Who chases to ensure that IT, Facilities, OcH, HR and other departments progress their part quickly & efficiently?
- What will it cost?
- Who will pay?

WPA package approved

- How long does it take to get approved?
- Who decides YES?
- Who decides NO?
- Who will pay?
- What is the appeal process?

Delivery

- How long does it take from **Request for Help** to **Deliver & operationalize** the package?
- Who ensures that what is delivered is fit for purpose?
- How will ongoing impact on performance be measured?



What would an ideal Workplace Adjustment Service look like across a multinational?



Ad hoc processes have been re-engineered as a Service providing employees worldwide with **equitable & efficient access** to the tools & flexibility they require to realise their potential – **no matter where they live or work.**



It is a **well publicised**, distinct ‘logistical’ service line, proactively **managed end to end**, informed by disability expertise, with **explicit performance standards that apply worldwide**



It delivers effective Adjustment Request “Packages” **within 14-20 days** from the person saying “*I need an adjustment*” ... to when it is delivered and working.



Both the individual and the managers **value the service and as valued service users are routinely asked for feedback**



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Drivers for global best practice include the need to:

Enhance productivity,
employee
engagement and
wellbeing



Liberate manager
time and energy so
they can 'manage'



Reduce turnover and
loss of talent



Reduce costs
triggered by
grievances and legal
disputes



Reinforce culture shift
from standardization
towards individual
empowerment



Reduce reputation,
regulatory and
operational risks



Enable a mobile
workforce worldwide



Reduce absenteeism



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We are not starting from scratch

- Pioneers are beginning to apply and adapt learning at national level across multiple jurisdictions

The screenshot shows a webpage with three overlapping report covers and a survey baseline analysis. The reports are:

- Moving from Ad Hoc to Streamlined Efficiency: The Lloyds Banking Group Case study**
- Business Disability Forum Case Study: Emerging best practice in the provision of workplace adjustments**
- Delivering business improvement by managing workplace adjustments as a core business process**

The survey baseline analysis is titled "Baseline Analysis of the May 2019 Survey on Workplace Accommodations in the Federal Public Service". It includes a table with the following data:

Category	Value
4000 people had a total of	133,000 days absence due to disabilities/health condition
This was calculated to be	1.62 days per person per year across the workforce.
Cost of condition related absence for the entire workforce	= £125 average salary cost per day x 133,000 days = £16.62M
Total cost of the 800 absenteeism BEFORE workplace adjustment	= £125 x 9,700 days = £1.21M

Other elements on the page include the Government of Canada logo, a search bar, and a menu.



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Moving from ad hoc to systemic and consistent business improvement: Some of the challenges

How do we get the Board to agree that a named senior business leader should be held accountable as Service Standard Owner for the quality of the end to end service? What national leaders should also be held to account?

What performance standards must we set globally – what must be left to the national leadership team?

You are asking us to create a visible cost to address a non-visible cost?

Should everyone who requests an adjustment be required to get a doctor's letter – even my dyslexic colleague?...why are we assessing even people who know what they require?

What management information should head office and/or national leaders monitor?

How do we minimise the risks triggered by a legal compliance culture?

HR tell me we don't have a problem – but that's not what I hear on the ground....

Who decides what's reasonable, and who pays?



Moving on from ad hoc:

- **No named senior leader** is responsible for the quality of the service – at global or national level
- **The legal compliance message:** we will only provide the tools & flexibility that you need if compelled to do so
- **Focus on medical advice & diagnosis NOT** on how managers enable productivity
- People **not trusted** to self refer
- Managers pay – which always slows delivery; delays can damage relationships
- **Managers expected to invest time & credibility** in trying to make the unmanaged system ‘work’ for each individual
- **Procurement do not require key suppliers** like Facilities Management to meet adjustment & accessibility related performance standards – again leading to delay and legal risk



...To a managed, designed, fit for purpose service system

Critical success factors: The fundamental building blocks

Leaders

- Decide that providing workplace adjustments is an **important Business Support Service** which needs to meet best practice *Not* mere legal compliance standards
- **Appoint an Executive Service Owner** to be accountable worldwide, who sets KPIs , agrees budget & resourcing, determines what to deliver centrally: holds named executive accountable at national level.
- **Set a 'speed of delivery' standard** of 14-20 days for every country..
- **Monitor Management Information** – pre & post the new service - that drives continuous improvement

Management

- A **dedicated Service Manager** is responsible for the design & management of 'end to end' service and for liaising with procurement as they locate & manage WPA related suppliers.
- **Line Managers do not pay**
- **Collects the data** which informs continuous improvement.
- Adjustments become a **managerial not medical responsibility**
- There is a **single, widely publicised 'door'** to the service
- Service re-design or design is informed by 'What Happens When You Ask for Adjustments' surveys



Critical success factors: The fundamental building blocks

Enabling products and processes

- **Line Managers encouraged to say ‘Yes’:** ‘denials’ need senior sign off.
- **Disability & accessibility expertise outsourced:** possibly with a Service Coordinator brought in for end to end – or for components - of the process..
- **Employees trusted to self refer** for frequently required ‘hard adjustments’ from a central catalogue.
- ‘Passports’ or ‘WPA Agreements’ capture what has been agreed.
- **Well publicised catalogue of ‘soft adjustments’** describes the level of flexibility to policies & procedures which the company regards as ‘reasonable’ and in effect has ‘pre-approved’.
- **WPA Service Manager agrees SLAs with:**
 - **Internal providers:** ICT, Property & FM, Occ Health, H&S, HR, Procurement
 - **External suppliers:** ICT, Facilities Management , Occ Health, Recruitment

Culture

- Communications convey the aim to provide a service that enhances productivity and well being, while treating everyone fairly.
- **Employees are trusted:** rarely required to provide medical evidence to prove they qualify.
- Managers & employees understand they are valued service users and are actively consulted.
- **Managers do not drive the process for their people**
- Senior executive monitoring of the now visible KPIs drives continuous improvement



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Moving on from ad hoc: Suppliers & the supply chain

What do we mean by 'suppliers'? Those who...

- Manage the end to end delivery of a broad range of workplace adjustments - like Microlink
- Provide one category of adjustments from a range of other suppliers- technology, ergonomic devices
- Provide a category of adjustments directly – Jaws, facilities adaptations
- Provide assessments which determine what adjustments are needed for particular individuals

Key challenges:

- The supply chain and infrastructure needed to guarantee consistent, rapid and cost-effective implementation of Workplace Adjustments (WPA) around the world does not exist.
- WPA recommendations often focus on the provision of key specialist items that may not readily available in every country.
- Multinationals are usually governed by procurement policies that restrict them from engaging small, local suppliers to acquire specialist, low volume items in a cost-effective manner.
- Procurement need to be actively involved in building the capacity of this fragmented supply chain



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The crucial strategic questions for Global HQ

- **What must Global HQ require?** Consistent delivery of the Fundamental Building Blocks
- **What do we want to communicate and encourage** to enable national leaders to present the business & ethical rationale for having a managed WPA service— and to ‘inspire’ them to drive culture and behavior change?
- **What do we facilitate?** Provide national leaders with the performance standards, the tools and the practical guidance that expedite improvement
- **What must we resource?** The service design & set up as well as ongoing, cross departmental. ...and B2B .. learning and development
- **What behaviors & leadership must we reward – and how?**



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The need & potential: a GBDN WPA Global Learning Exchange?

- To enable **peer to peer support** for members of this emerging community of Senior Executives & Managers
- To enable members to **define best practice** in the design & management of the end to end WPA process, across multiple geographies & legal jurisdictions.
- To **co-produce the new tools & guidance** multinationals need if they are to deliver accommodations to a consistent quality standard worldwide.
- To include locating and building **relationships and capacity with key suppliers** across multiple geographies
- To **enable GBDN members as thought leaders and innovators** to enable the wider multinational business community to enhance productivity and employee engagement – while driving economic growth.



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Questions and next steps



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Impact on absenteeism costs

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Workplace Adjustments, the impact & ROI

Data Study for: Lloyds Banking Group
Period of study referrals: 2013 - 2015
Number of employees: approximately 82,000
Number of referrals resulting in intervention: 16,000 (roughly 1 in 5 of the workforce)

How much is reducing your condition related absence bill by 90% worth to you?

BEFORE WORKPLACE ADJUSTMENT INTERVENTION
4000 people had a total of 133,000 days absence due to disabilities/health condition this was calculated to be 1.62 days per person per year across the workforce.
Cost of condition related absence for the entire workforce
= £125 average salary cost per day x 133,000 days = **£16.62M**

AFTER WORKPLACE ADJUSTMENT INTERVENTION
We further analysed 800 employees absence due to disabilities/health condition after intervention / workplace adjustment.

Total cost of the 800 absenteeism **BEFORE** workplace adjustment intervention
= £125 x 9,700 days = **£1.21M**

Total cost of the 800 absenteeism **AFTER** workplace adjustment intervention
= £125 x 850 days = **£106K**

Cost saving of **£1.1M**
Resulting in a condition related absence reduction of **91%**

COST OF INTERVENTION
800 employees x av.cost of WPA £670 per person = **£536,000**
ROI = 2x

In 2018 Microlink surveyed 75,000 individuals in the financial sector

- In total **68,599 absence days** were reported by the **2042 people** who had disclosed a condition
- The cost of days lost equates to **over £8.5 million in lost productivity** over one year
- The average cost for provision of a Workplace Adjustment by Microlink was £700 per person. Total cost of effective workplace adjustments **£1.45 million**
- **Cost saving of over £7 million**



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